

The President's Daily Brief

~~Top Secret~~ 28 October 1968



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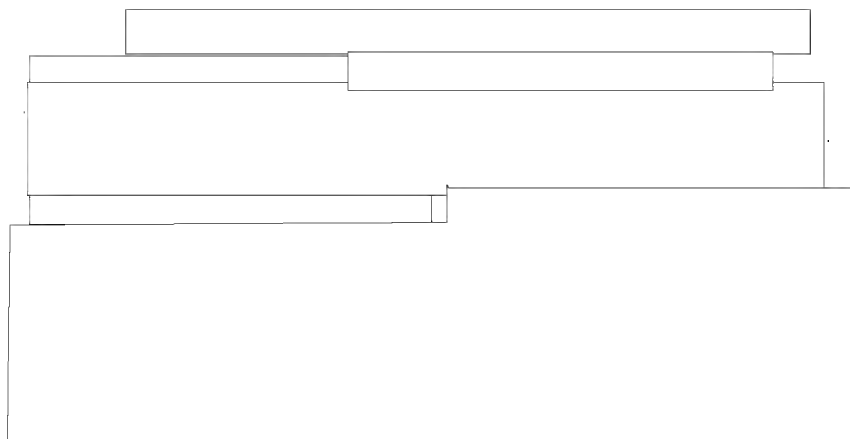
**THE PRESIDENT'S
DAILY BRIEF
28 OCTOBER 1968**

1. Egypt-Israel



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2. Soviet Union



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3. Czechoslovakia

The National Assembly passed a federalization bill yesterday giving the Slovaks near equality in all aspects of national life. The bill sets up separate Czech and Slovak governments subordinate to a skeletal federal government in Prague. It also paves the way for similar divisions in other nationwide organizations. The plan goes into effect 1 January.

This has been an extremely controversial issue and implementation is going to result in confusion and quite possibly in a rekindling of traditional antagonisms between the Czechs and Slovaks.

While there may be some divide-and-conquer advantages for Moscow in the federalization, it was in the legislative hopper long before 20 August. In fact, some Russians, including Moscow's special emissary Kuznetsov, have urged the plan be shelved indefinitely. They probably fear internal instability and a further weakening of the Communist Party's control.

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Withdrawal of Pact forces from Czechoslovakia is continuing.

4. Laos

With the shift of the monsoon winds comes the almost ritualistic change of roles in Laotian warfare. This year is no exception. As the rains end, it becomes the Communists' turn to move out trying to recapture positions taken by government troops and loyal guerrillas during their rainy season offensive. The Communists are moving now, pushing in an outpost or two, probing around more important bases.

No major actions have taken place yet, although, if the enemy follows his usual pattern, some serious attacks can be expected against the northern redoubts of the tough little Meo guerrillas.

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5. Cyprus

Pressure from Athens has forced Minister of Interior and Defense Georkatzis to resign. Georkatzis is charged with having aided the group which tried to assassinate Papadopoulos. A political storm is brewing over the resignation, however, as powerful factions call for general elections and a whole new government.

There is a good chance that the intercommunal talks will be suspended and some chance, if the atmosphere becomes sufficiently charged, that firebrands could stir fresh trouble between Turk and Greek Cypriots.

6. France

A former minister in the French Government saw De Gaulle last week and subsequently told an American official that he had never seen the General so gloomy. De Gaulle, he said, seems convinced the world is on the brink of war.

Ambassador Shriver comments these attacks of depression usually follow some blow to one of De Gaulle's pet policies--in this instance, the damage done his concept of detente by the invasion of Czechoslovakia--and are compounded by his frustration with France's impotence in shaping the course of major world events.

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FOR THE PRESIDENT'S EYES ONLY

- 1.) Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
- 2.) North Vietnamese Reflections of U S
Political Attitudes



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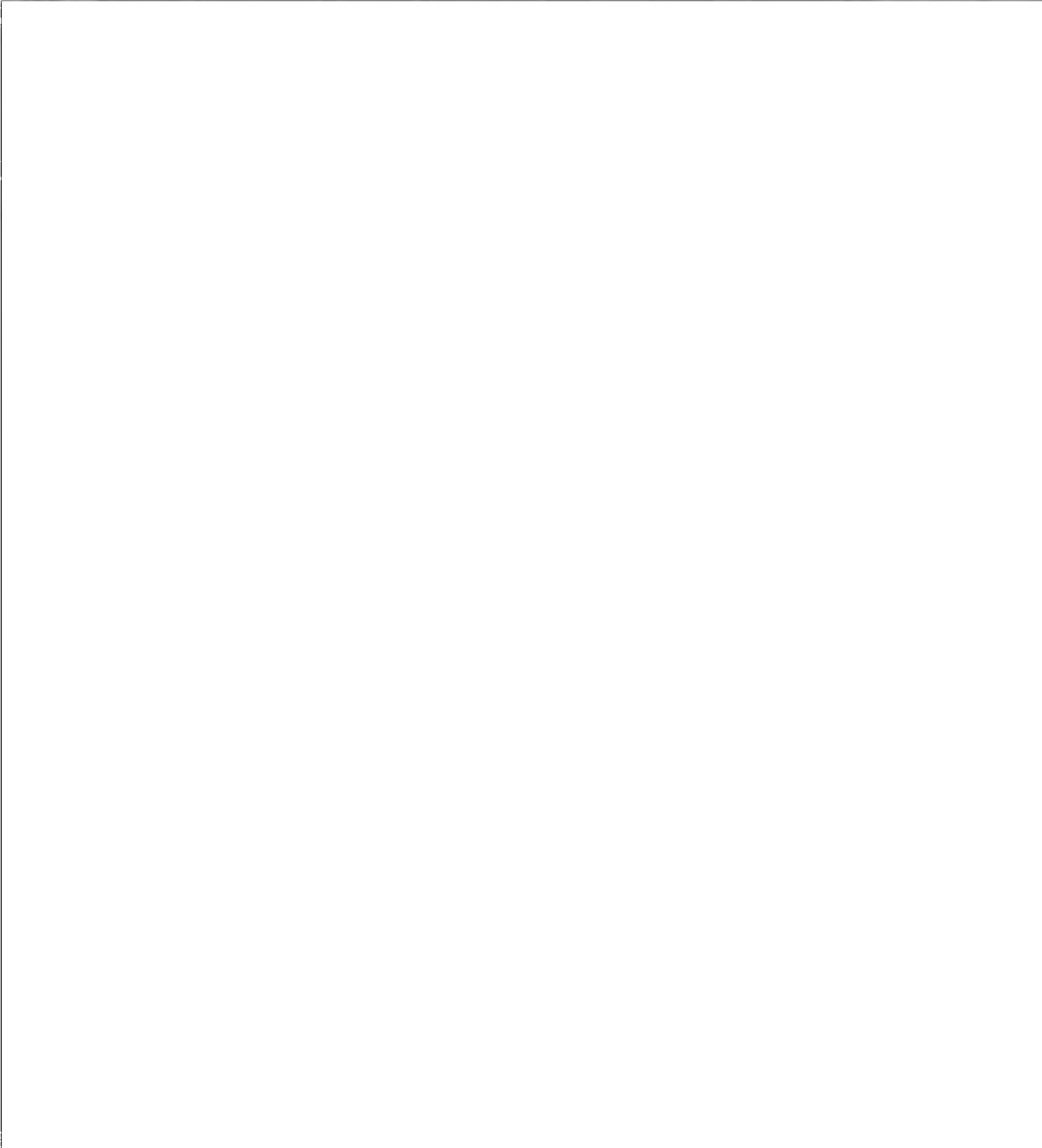
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**Special Daily Report on North Vietnam
for the President's Eyes Only**

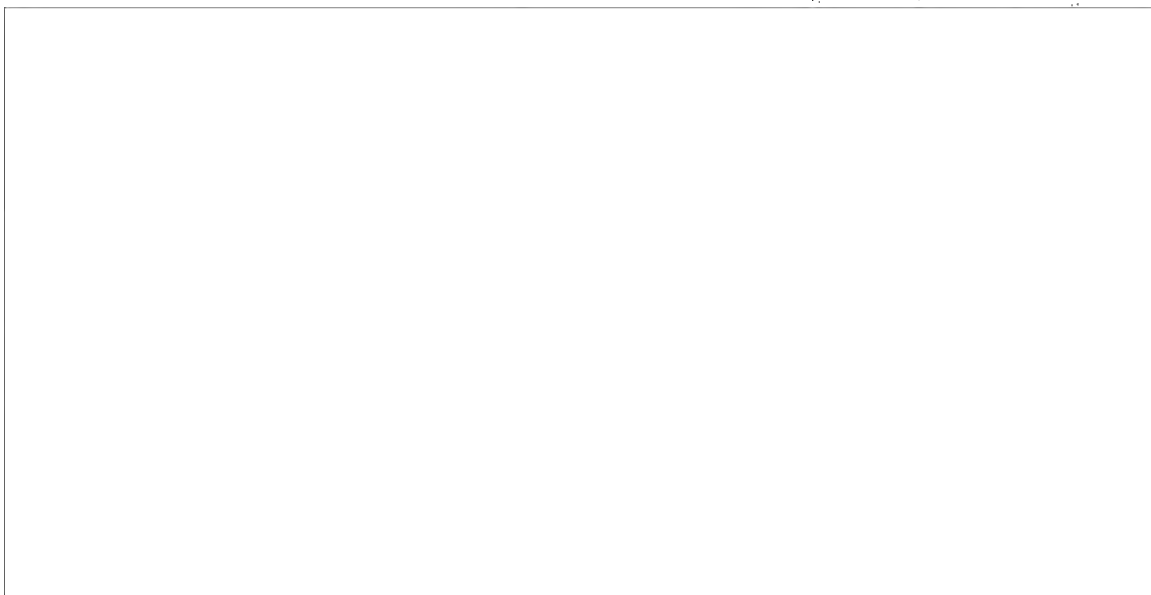
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I. NOTES ON THE SITUATION



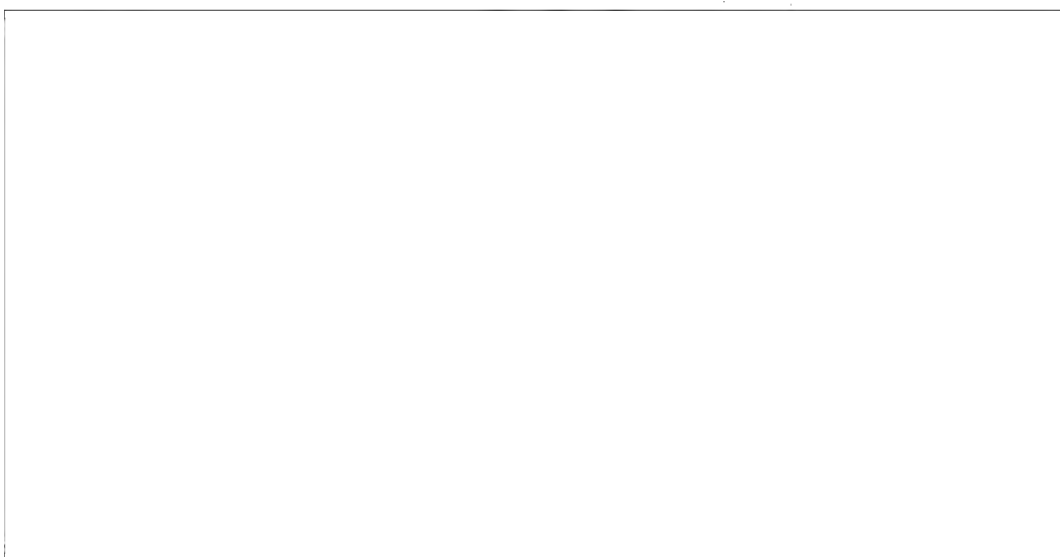
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Comment on Chinese Aid: Despite Peking's disapproval of any negotiations between Hanoi and the US, Chinese economic aid apparently continues unhampered by politics. A Western diplomat in Peking reports the North Vietnamese ambassador has expressed his satisfaction with China's assistance, noting in some cases the Chinese had made shipping available for North Vietnam - bound goods at the expense of China's own shipping needs.

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Logistics: The beginning of the dry season in the Laos panhandle has brought an increase in truck traffic and stepped-up repair and construction work.

A Mu Gia Pass roadwatch team observed an average of 16 trucks per day moving south between 1 and 17 October, compared with 13 per day during the June through September rainy season.

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II. NORTH VIETNAMESE REFLECTIONS OF US POLITICAL
ATTITUDES ON THE WAR

There is nothing of significance to report
today.

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